

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS PARIS 21167

USOECD

PASS ERDA FOR GOUSE, VANDERRYIN; STATE FOR PROCHNIK

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OECD, TECH
SUBJECT: IEA MEETING OF AD HOC GROUP ON UNDERGROUND
COAL GASIFICATION

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CURRENT PROGRAMS ON UNDERGROUND
COAL GASIFICATION WERE REVIEWED BY AN AD HOC GROUP

OF THE IEA WORKING PARTY ON COAL TECHNOLOGY. IT WAS
CONCLUDED THAT NEAR TERM PROSPECTS DO NOT EXIST FOR
DEVELOPING IEA COOPERATIVE R&D PROGRAMS IN THIS AREA.
END SUMMARY.

2. IEA AD HOC GROUP ON COAL UNDERGROUND GASIFICATION
MET IN PARIS, JULY 19, 1977. THE MEETING WAS AT-
TENDE BY EXPERTS FROM BELGIUM, GERMANY, UK AND SWEDEN.
THE OECD SCIENCE ADVISOR FOR ENERGY REPRESENTED THE
U.S.

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3. UNDERGROUND GASIFICATION BASED UPON U.S. PATTERNS
WAS STATED AS PRESENTING NO MORE THAN MARGINAL INTEREST
FOR WESTERN EUROPE SINCE U.S. TECHNOLOGY HAS BEEN
DEVELOPED FOR SHALLOW DEPTHS. MOST DEPOSITS LYING AT
SHALLOW DEPTHS HAVE BEEN EXPLOITED IN EUROPE AND
VARIOUS FACTORS MITIGATE AGAINST FURTHER WORKING.

THE FUTURE OF UNDERGROUND GASIFICATION DEPENDS, INSTEAD, ON THE ABILITY TO WORK RELATIVELY THIN SEAMS LYING AT MIDDLE OR GREAT DEPTHS (GREATER THAN 1000 METERS). THE BELGIUM AND GERMAN GOVERNMENT BELIEVE PROCESSES CAN BE DEVELOPED FOR EXTRACTING ECONOMICALLY ATTRACTIVE GAS UNDER THESE CONDITIONS AND THAT THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO INCREASE WESTERN EUROPEAN COAL PRODUCTION WHICH OTHERWISE IS ANTICIPATED TO REMAIN AT CURRENT LOW LEVELS FOR THE NEXT 5 - 10 YEARS. THE IMPACT WHICH IN SITU GASIFICATION MIGHT HAVE ON EUROPEAN ENERGY SUPPLIES IS CONSIDERED JUSTIFICATION FOR UNDERTAKING THIS HIGH RISK R&D.

4. WITH THESE CONSIDERATIONS, BELGIUM AND FRG HAVE SIGNED A BILATERAL AGREEMENT, AT GOVERNMENT LEVEL, FOR A COORDINATED RESEARCH PROGRAM LEADING TO THE INDUSTRIAL APPLICATION OF UNDERGROUND COAL GASIFICATION AT GREAT DEPTH. THE PROGRAMS ARE CONDUCTED ON THE BELGIUM SIDE BY THE INIEX (INSTITUTE NATIONAL DES INDUSTRIES EXTRACTIVES) AND ON THE GERMAN SIDE BY KFA (KERNFORSCHUNGSANSLAGE) JULICH. COSTS FOR THE GERMAN PROGRAM ARE PROJECTED AS 5 MILLION DOLLARS FOR THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1/1/75 AND 12/31/78. THE BELGIUM EFFORT IS FUNDED AT A LOWER LEVEL. THESE ARE CURRENTLY THE ONLY ACTIVE PROGRAMS IN WESTERN EUROPE.

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5. THE EC, SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY ITS COUNCIL, INTENDS TO INITIATE A COAL GASIFICATION PROGRAM NEXT

YEAR. IT IS LIKELY THAT THIS WORK WILL BE COORDINATED WITH THE ABOVE EFFORT.

6. ON THE BASIS OF ITS REVIEW, THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP CONCLUDED THAT THERE WERE NOT YET SUFFICIENTLY BROAD PROGRAMS OR INTEREST IN UNDERGROUND COAL GASIFICATION TO JUSTIFY DEVELOPMENT OF A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL IEA PROJECT.

7. DEMONSTRATION FIELD TRIALS ARE SCHEDULED IN SEVERAL YEARS AND IT IS BELIEVED THAT ADDITIONAL INTEREST MAY RESULT AT THAT TIME. IN THIS EVENT, COOPERATIVE R&D POSSIBILITIES COULD BE REVIEWED AGAIN. SALZMAN

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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition History: n/a
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